

Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn 1-Day Itinerary

If you have only one day to explore, the Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn recommends this itinerary:

Exit the parking lot at Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn making a left turn heading north on **Patrick's Point Drive**. Less than one mile (0.8 miles) on the left is the entrance to **Patrick's Point State Park**, a magnificent 640 oceanfront acres of hiking trails to headlands and coves, and the sandy **Agate Beach** on the north end of the park. A whole day could be well spent here.

But with your one-day time constraint, our recommendation is to drive into the park, pay the day use fee, and head to the **Wedding Rock** parking area. From that area, you can quickly access the **Rim Trail** that goes around the relatively level bluff top of the park land. Three places in this area of the park are "must see": (1) **Wedding Rock**: a huge solid-rock promontory that has a portion of its top carved out like a huge rock deck. Wonderful setting affording great views of the surrounding area including the Patrick's **Point headland** to the immediate south and **Mussel Rock** to the north. And yes, weddings do take place from time to time here. (2) **Patrick's Point headland** viewpoint just south of Wedding Rock and (3) **Rocky Point** just south of the Patrick's Point headland accessed off the Rim Trail. Very dramatic settings and excellent whale-watching areas.

If you are not time-constrained, continue south on the Rim Trail and take the **Abalone Point trail** to a beautiful cove and then back to the Rim Trail and head south to the southern tip of the park at Palmer Point. If time is pressing, drive from the Wedding Rock parking area to the **Palmer Point** parking area. Short hike to a spectacular viewpoint up and down the coast: a must-see. On the north side of the Palmer Point headland is a good trail down to the shore where **harbor seals** are often seen close to the shoreline and tide pools abound.

Leaving Palmer Point, a drive to the far north of the park takes you to the **Agate Beach** parking area. The geology of the park changes dramatically from rocky to sandy just north of Mussel Rock and on into the Agate Beach area. Follow the well-marked and well-maintained trail down to a beautiful expansive stretch of sandy beach. You can hike north from here for miles and access the **lagoon beaches**, the closest being the largest lagoon called **Big Lagoon**.

Ceremonial Rock and **Lookout Rock** are special places in the park and should be seen if time permits.



Mussel Rock



Patrick's Point

Leaving Patrick's Point State Park, turn left and head north on Patrick's Point Drive for one mile where you will access Highway 101 and head north on 101. A very scenic drive around a series of natural lagoons leads to the **Redwood National Park headquarters** named the "**Kuchel Visitor Center**." The access is a left turn off the freeway at the north end of a long straight stretch of highway with the Pacific Ocean on your left and **Freshwater Lagoon** on your right. The visitor center is an excellent facility with access to park ranger staff, maps, books, and a sandy beach just to the west.



Freshwater Lagoon

The **Redwood National Park** has beaches as well as the largest surviving stands of the **old-growth giant redwoods**. There is no fee and the park is vast and spread out. Highway 101 goes through a small town called **Orick** that is now home to the Redwood National Park's offices in a beautiful new building that is the crown jewel of architecture in Orick. Orick has a myriad of wood/driftwood/burl businesses with some beautifully carved **wood art** by local artisans that is worth a closer look.

Just north of Orick, the only road that heads to the eastern part of the park begins. **Bald Hills Road** winds easterly uphill for several miles before reaching a relatively level ridgetop area and the parking area to **Lady Bird Johnson Grove**. This is a almost level easy walking 1.5 mile loop trail with a high concentration of **giant redwoods**. This is a self-guided hike with numbered posts that correspond to a brochure available to hikers at the trail head. This is a "must do" trail.

After completing the Lady Bird Johnson trail off of Bald Hills Road (a 25 minute driving trip north from the Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn), return west on Bald Hills Road to Highway 101. Head north on Highway 101 for two miles and turn left on Davison Road. Just a few hundred yards on this road finds you with expansive fields on each side of the road. This is the **Elk Meadow** of the Redwood National Park and the favorite habitat of the **Roosevelt elk herds** that inhabit the park lands. You are likely to see elk here. Head west another half mile on Davison Road and you reach the end of the paved road and the 8 miles of gravel road begin that end at the spectacular **Fern Canyon** (see "If you have two days" itinerary). Turn left at the end of the paved road onto a new paved road that quickly leads to a new area of the park being developed. New restrooms and a new large paved parking area provide a good rest stop. A paved trail leads to a beautiful large pond and the trail up to **Trillium Falls** (if you have more than one day).



Stone Lagoon Schoolhouse near Orick



Roosevelt Elk Near

Head east back to Highway 101 on Davison Road and turn left and head north two miles and take the **Newton Drury Scenic Parkway** exit to **Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park**. This is a “must see ” and one of the great drives of the West. Just a mile off the highway, this scenic drive unfolds a gorgeous natural prairie surrounded by giant redwood groves. Driving north one mile on the parkway, turn left at the entrance to the **Prairie Creek Redwoods State Park visitor center**. If you have already paid your day use fee at Patrick’s Point State Park, the park ranger at the entry station will just wave you through. Park in the visitor parking area and notice the sign marking the start of the main trails in the park. The **Revelation Trail** is an almost level approximately 1.5 mile loop trail with a high concentration of **giant old growth redwoods**. Informational plaques are sprinkled along the trail. This a “must see”. Highly recommended on a rainy late fall, winter, or early spring day because of the level terrain and nearly continuous tree canopy providing safe dry walking conditions. The sound of rain on the giant trees is a uniquely special and memorable experience.

The entire park is a revelation of awesome natural beauty. For the time-constrained, after completing the Revelation Trail, find the trail-head sign for the **James Irvine Trail** and hike the first half mile where you come upon a magical **redwood footbridge** that crosses the beautiful flowing **Home Creek** on its way to Fern Canyon. Standing on the this old bridge carved around the old growth giant redwoods with the creek sounds and the forest canopy above is a perfect place to take a deep breath, unwind, and drink in this profound natural setting. This trail continues on 4.5 miles to **Fern Canyon** and is one of the most popular trails if you have more than one day.

Return to visitor center parking and exit the Prairie Creek State Redwoods Park and turn left on the **Scenic Parkway** and continue north. This drive is one of the great scenic drives of the West and takes you through magnificent stands of giant redwoods. Highly recommended is the **Big Tree Wayside** where there is a short paved trail to the “**Big Tree**” known for its great girth. A sign next to the tree makes for the perfect photo op.

Behind the Big Tree is a trail to the **Cathedral Trees** recommended for those that are not time-constrained.



Prairie Creek Redwoods

Continue north on the parkway and you end up seeing signs that you will be merging back to Highway 101. For the one day traveler, it is recommended to turn around here and return southerly on the parkway for a second look at the trees. You will pass Prairie Creek visitor center and then back onto Highway 101 heading south back to Trinidad and the Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn. After crossing the most southerly lagoon Big Lagoon, take the

Patrick's Point Drive exit and head southwest down Patrick's Point Drive two miles to the Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn. Pull into to the paved off-street inn parking area and stop in for the delicious afternoon buffet of inn-baked dessert goodies, organic gourmet coffee, teas, fresh fruit, and cold beverages.

After refreshing yourselves, exit the Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn and turn right heading south on **Patrick's Point Drive**. This drive is one of the most dramatic scenic drives in the West with many turnouts along the way to enjoy the great ocean views and offshore rock formations for the first two miles and then about two miles of emerald green redwood forests. The four-mile drive from the inn south on Patrick's Point Drive ends at a stop sign and the village of Trinidad.

Turn right at the stop sign and you will discover the **Trinidad Shopping Center** known also as **Saunders' Plaza** on your left. **Murphy's Market** is an excellent supermarket with a good deli and excellent wine and beer selections. The post office is next to the market and a very good fast food place called the **Lighthouse Café** is across from the market in its own separate building. We call it "gourmet fast food" (see our "Dining" reviews). Across the street from the shopping center is a Chevron gas station and mini-mart. Just west of the Chevron are two nice well-run shops called **WindandSea** and the **Trinidad Trading Company**? These two shops are very creative stores featuring work by local artisans. WindandSea has a huge selection of shells and crafts and the Trinidad Trading Company has more locally-made jewelry. Both of these special stores are worth a stop.

Heading westerly from the Trading Company and WindandSea , the Main Street turns into Trinity Street as you curve to the left and head south through the village. You pass the Trinidad Elementary School and the Town Hall and the police and fire departments. At the end of Trinity Street. You will find the **Memorial Lighthouse** (not a functioning one) built to honor the Trinidad fisherman that have been lost at sea. There is public parking and a stop here rewards you with a spectacular ocean and harbor view. There is a public access trail here down into **Trinidad Bay** and **Indian Beach**.



Scotty Point



Memorial Light House Trinidad Bay

Westerly from the Memorial Lighthouse, Edwards Street descends down a long hill to the **Trinidad State Beach** at sea level. Highly recommended as a "must see". Hooking several hundred yards east from the state beach, you find another "must see"the **Trinidad pier and harbor** (see the beaches and restaurants pages of

this website for more information). Strolling out on the pier, smelling the salt air, and watching the fisherman and looking out at the boats harbored here is a wonderful experience.

After exploring this special area of the village, retrace your route back through town to the stop sign where you would turn left to head back to the Turtle Rocks Oceanfront Inn. Instead of turning left, however, make a right turn here and head south. This road is essentially a continuation of Patrick's Point Drive but is named **Scenic Drive** as it traverses south and hugs the coastline to the southern end of Trinidad at **Moonstone Beach**. This a "must do, must see". This road more than lives up to its name. There are many turnouts and it is a truly breathtaking drive. (see beaches page of this website for more details).



Trinidad State Beach



Trinidad Pier

Finish your one full day in Trinidad with a dinner at the **Moonstone Grill**, one of the finest restaurants on the West Coast, overlooking a panoramic view of **Moonstone Beach** and **Camel Rock**.

Return to your spacious oceanfront retreat at the Turtle Rocks, relax on your room deck, and enjoy the phenomenal view. And reflect on the incredible experiences of your "one day" in Trinidad and the Redwood Coast. Create new memories at the Turtle Rocks...

Note of caution: there are four short one-lane stretches of road on Scenic Drive beginning one mile south of the village of Trinidad. Not recommended at night or during any adverse weather conditions.